BUNCOMBE MADISON REGIONAL HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN: 2026 UPDATES

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PURPOSE OF THE HAZARD MITIGATION PLAN

Hazard Mitigation:

"Any sustained action taken to reduce or eliminate long-term risk to human life and property from hazards."

The Plan Helps Us:

- Identify and understand regional hazards
- Assess vulnerabilities
- Prioritize risk-reduction strategies
- Guide future investments
- Support safer and more resilient communities

A REGIONAL APPROACH TO SHARED RISKS

Participating Jurisdictions:

Buncombe County

- Asheville
- Biltmore Forest
- Black Mountain
- Montreat
- Weaverville
- Woodfin

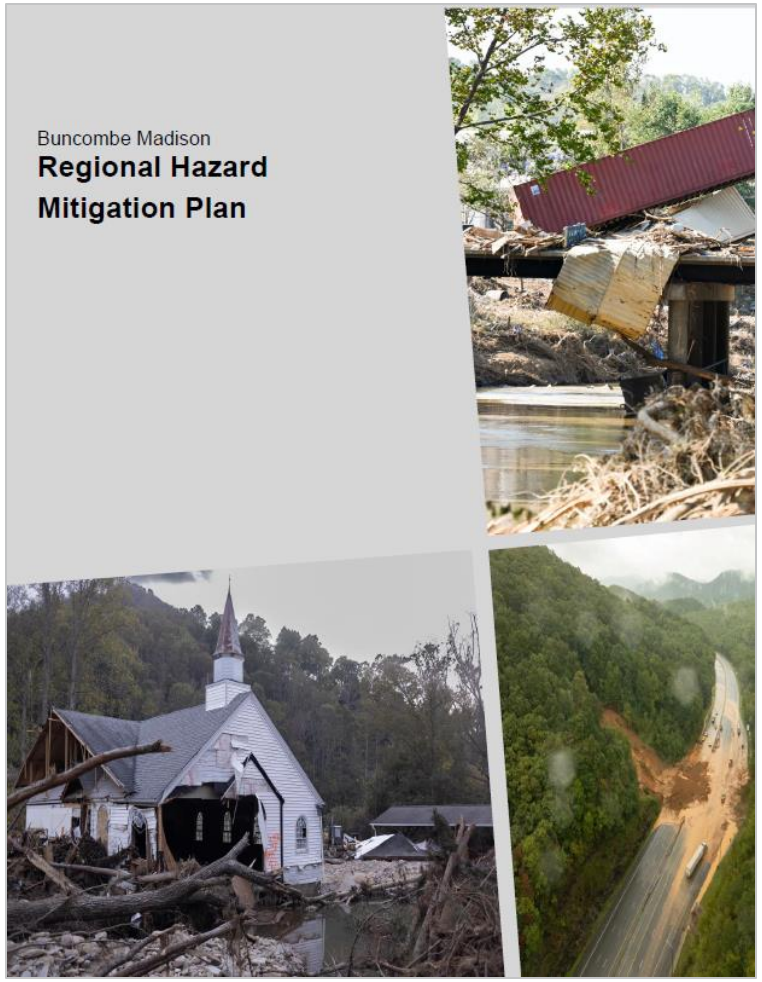
Madison County

- Hot Springs
- Marshall
- Mars Hill

Planning Highlights

- Regional planning committee
- County and municipal participation
- Stakeholder engagement
- Public outreach
- Seven-month planning process

WHY THIS PLAN MATTERS



Hazard Mitigation = Investing Before the Next Disaster

- Reduces future losses to people, property, and infrastructure
- Supports safer rebuilding and smarter development
- Positions communities for FEMA mitigation funding
- Required to maintain eligibility for several federal grant programs

2021-2026: WHAT CHANGED IN THIS FIVE-YEAR UPDATE?

Key Updates:

- Helene recovery lessons integrated throughout the plan
- Expanded future conditions and resilience analysis
- Enhanced social vulnerability assessment
- Updated risk and vulnerability data
- New mitigation actions and priorities
- Expanded alignment with recovery and resilience initiatives

HOW HELENE SHAPED THIS PLAN

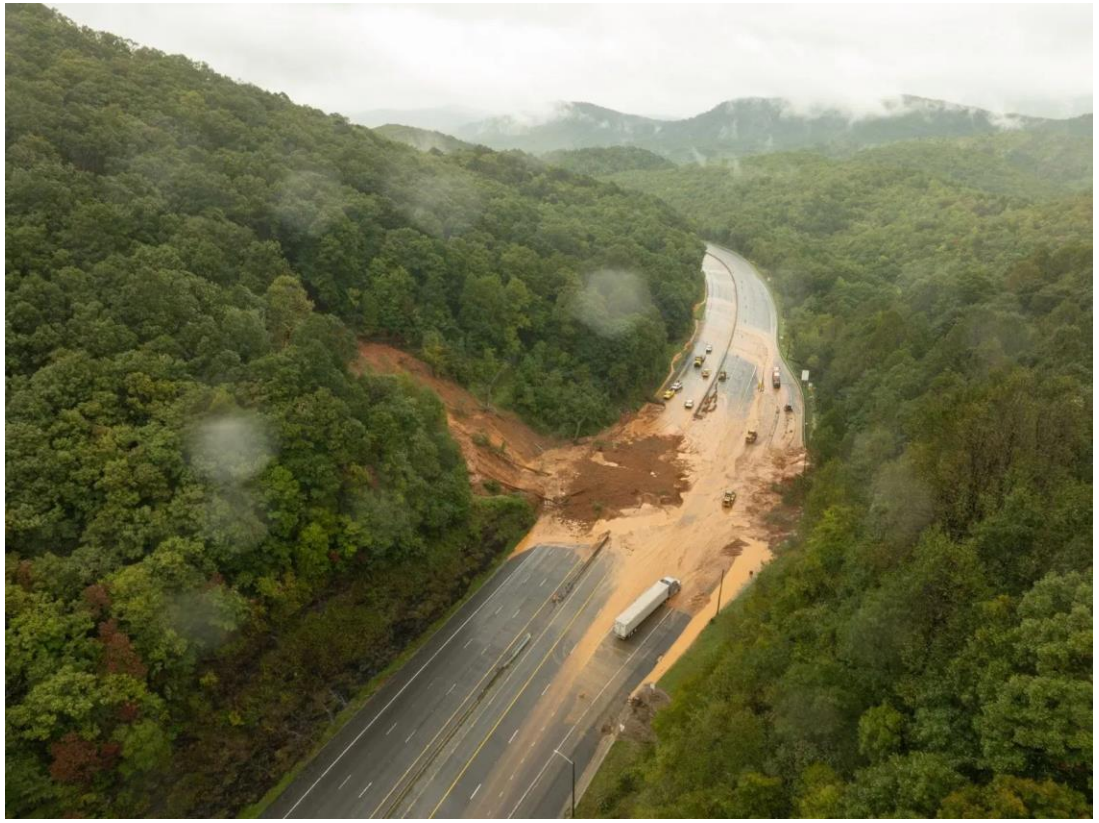


Photo: Josh Bell

- Updated flood risk assumptions
- Greater emphasis on infrastructure resilience
- Expanded landslide mitigation priorities
- Increased focus on recovery integration
- Enhanced future conditions analysis

REGIONAL HAZARD PROFILE

Highest-priority hazards identified based on potential impact to people, infrastructure, and economic activity:

- Widespread Flooding
- Landslides and slope failures
- Wildfire
- Severe thunderstorms
- Flash flooding
- Winter storms
- Cyber disruptions



EMERGING RISKS AND CHANGING CONDITIONS

Looking Forward:

Wildfire Risk

- Increased fuel loading from Helene-related blowdown
- Greater wildfire potential in forested areas
- Elevated wildfire concerns may persist for years

Social Vulnerability

- Certain populations face disproportionate disaster impacts

Future Conditions

- More intense rainfall events
- Continued development pressures
- Aging infrastructure challenges

MITIGATION IN ACTION

Structural Projects

- Flood mitigation projects
- Infrastructure hardening
- Facility protection
- Slope stabilization

Natural Resource Approaches

- Floodplain preservation
- Watershed protection
- Open space conservation

Planning and Policy

- Development standards
- Public education
- Preparedness initiatives

REGIONAL MITIGATION PRIORITIES (2026-2031)

Priority Area	Example Actions	Community Benefit
Flood Resilience	Flood mitigation projects, floodplain management	Reduced property damage
Landslide Risk Reduction	Slope stabilization, hazard mapping	Safer transportation corridors
Wildfire Preparedness	Fuel reduction, Firewise efforts	Reduced wildfire risk
Infrastructure Resilience	Backup power, utility redundancy, critical facility hardening	More reliable services
Community Preparedness	Outreach, warning systems, public education	Better-informed residents
Recovery Integration	Align mitigation with recovery projects	Stronger long-term resilience

PROGRESS SINCE THE 2021 PLAN

Mitigation planning produces results

Examples include:

- Completed mitigation projects
- Stronger regional coordination and preparedness
- Continued participation in resilience initiatives
- Enhanced intergovernmental coordination
- Improved capability to pursue mitigation and resilience funding



WHY ADOPTION MATTERS

Adoption supports:

- Continued hazard mitigation planning
- Long-term resilience efforts
- Regional coordination
- Future mitigation project development
- Eligibility for federal and state mitigation funding programs

Key Message

Adoption preserves eligibility for FEMA mitigation funding and provides the framework for future resilience investments throughout the region.

REQUESTED ACTION

Recommendation

Adopt the 2026 Buncombe Madison Regional Hazard Mitigation Plan

Closing Thought

Recovery restores what was damaged. Mitigation reduces what can be damaged next time.